

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: COUNTY FACILITIES

DATE: JULY 19, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Haskell
O'Connor
F. Thomas
Champagne
Geraghty
Girard

Committee Member Absent:

Supervisor VanNess

Others Present:

Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings
William Remington, Superintendent, Dept. of
Public Works
Fred Austin, Building Projects Coordinator
William Thomas, Chairman
Joan Parsons, Commissioner of Administrative
and Fiscal Services

Joan Sady, Clerk
Supervisor Kenny
Supervisor Bentley
Supervisor Mason
Supervisor Caimano

Clark Patterson Associates' Representatives:

John Martin
Jon Norris
Zachary Kasky
Marv Lemery, Fire Prevention & Building Code
Enforcement Administrator
Kate Hogan, District Attorney
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office
Specialist

Mr. Haskell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Frank Morehouse, Superintendent of Buildings, distributed an Agenda packet to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. Haskell referred to Agenda Item 2A, Health and Human Services Building/Municipal Center Addition. He explained that representatives from Clark Patterson Associates were in attendance today to report the current status of both projects.

Privilege of the floor was extended to John Martin, of Clark Patterson Associates (CPA), who introduced Jon Norris and Zachary Kasky, the architects on the projects.

Mr. Norris greeted the Committee and explained the presentation would begin with a report on the various departments that had met with CPA; which departments were

in the new facilities and their respective locations.

Mr. O'Connor entered the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Mr. Norris explained the scope of the Health and Human Services Building had changed since the project began, due to new State Legislation. Leading up to this point, he noted detailed questionnaires had been completed and a number of interviews had been conducted with regards to the actual work production in each department.

Mr. Norris pointed out the new Health & Human Services Building (HHS) would contain a number of county departments and agency-related departments. (He was aided in his presentation by a Power Point slide show and a copy is on file with the minutes.) He reminded the Committee members the Point of Entry was a direct result of new State Legislation that now required a single entry point for the Office for the Aging (OFA), Department of Social Services (DSS) and Health Services (HS).

In addition, Mr. Norris stated the HHS would also contain two particular agencies, Council for Prevention and Youth Advocacy, due to their strong links with the County departments also in this building. He mentioned the square footage was continuously being reviewed for ways to consolidate and share space.

Messrs. Thomas and Caimano entered the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

As for the space for the NYS Department of Labor (DOL) and Employment and Training (E&T) Offices, Mr. Norris reported an extensive review had been conducted. He noted the State and County Agencies would be merged into one blended area which would eliminate duplicate applications.

Mr. Norris further stated that CPA had also consulted with other counties with regards to their space needs and shared the information with Warren County's Department Heads. He said he felt it was an effective tool for paring down the requested square footage for both of the buildings.

Next, Mr. Norris turned to the Municipal Center Building Addition and acknowledged the Courts System's need for additional space was the driver, or catalyst, behind such addition. He noted the new space would house the following departments: Tourism; Tourism Storage; Board of Elections; Personnel/Human Resources; Civil Service Testing and Conferencing; Board of Supervisors/ County Administrator/Clerk of the Board; Fire & Building Codes; Purchasing; County Attorney and Self Insurance.

The MC Addition, Mr. Norris explained, would result in renovations to the vacated office spaces and the Court System would reimburse the County for the renovations to the office space it took over. As for the Old Jail, he said, the space was still being investigated to compare the original weight load construction, compared to the new weight load for storage, and what bars could be removed. He said the Core Team hoped the Old Jail would provide the storage needs for the Board of Elections. He

explained the Team had been very cautious in examining the space needs.

Responding to Mr. Kenny's question, Mr. Norris confirmed that regardless of what voting machine the State finally selected, he was certain that some climate controls would need to be installed to regulate the humidity levels. He further noted some of the upper floor areas may be able to serve as storage space for some of the lower floor areas.

Ms. Hogan and Mr. Lemery entered the meeting at 10:11 a.m.

Regarding the MC renovations, Mr. Norris mentioned the scope of renovations for the Courts and District Attorney's Office was yet to be determined, along with the location of the EOC (emergency operations center).

Mr. Norris pointed out that certain program elements would NOT be part of this project. He reminded the Committee members the following options had been eliminated: Competitive Edge Agency; Tourism Rest Stop; Public Temporary Shelter Sites; Employee Fitness; and Employee Children Day Care Center.

As the project had developed, Mr. Norris reported, CPA had maintained a record of the various decisions being made and then grouped them into a type of "Mission Statement." He referred to slides 4 and 5 of the Power Point presentation.

Turning next to the Square Footage Summary slides, Mr. Norris distributed a printed handout to all in attendance (and a copy is on file with the minutes). He reiterated that CPA had worked with a number of counties, similar in size to Warren County, which provided valuable information in evaluating the actual space requirements.

Continuing, Mr. Norris observed the initial square footage for the HHS building had been 74,000 sf (square feet) and was currently at 96,490 sf (see the Summary of Scope Changes slide). One major portion of the increased size, he noted, was a result of the new Point of Entry requirement.

Mr. Remington commented the original square footage had not included the office space to be rented to the various agencies, such as DOL, Youth Advocacy and the Council for Prevention. Mr. Norris agreed and also pointed out the agencies would be renting the space from the County. Should the County Departments need to expand, Mr. Norris noted the County would have the option not to renew the leases.

Next, Mr. Norris pointed out, the preliminary layouts for the HHS Building and MC Addition were illustrated with bubble diagrams to demonstrate the general proximity of the various offices. He further noted the areas where the staff would interact with the general public were located on the main floor, while the staff-only areas were on the floors above/below. He said only the staff would need to use the connecting elevators.

Responding to Mr. O'Connor's questions, Mr. Norris explained several meetings had

been held with the NYS DOL where representatives from the State, Region, and Local offices, along with Workforce Development Representatives in attendance as well. In addition, he said he had distributed minutes of the meeting to all in attendance and no negative comments had been received.

Next, Mr. Norris turned to the new MC Addition's bubble diagrams as he noted the basement floor would contain storage for Tourism and Building Codes, along with classrooms for Civil Service testing. One suggestion, he noted, for the unassigned basement space, was to relocate the Supreme Court Law Library from its current location.

Mr. Norris pointed out the second floor of the MC Addition would house the County Attorney, Purchasing, Board of Supervisors, County Administrator and the Human Resources Department. He mentioned there would be 2 entrances, a public entrance at the front, as well as a staff entrance towards the back.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Zackary Kasky, of CPA, who referred to the Site Plan slides as he briefly reviewed the various site options. He pointed out the topography of the site varied quite a bit which limited the location choices. In addition, he said, when they studied the land beyond the existing parking lot, and found a fair amount of running water, as well as standing water, which would prevent development of the site. Before the water was discovered, he stated, Option A had been developed.

Next, Mr. Kasky turned to Option B, which placed the building at the top of the hill, with a controlled point of entry at the front of the building. However, he noted both Option A and B had been eliminated upon closer examination of the grounds.

As for Option C, Mr. Kasky explained, the L shaped building was partially on the hill, with two parking lots (at the upper and lower entrances) which also created two points of entry. He said the Sheriff's Office had ruled out Option C for security purposes.

Mr. Kasky next reported that Option D called for a V shaped building, placed at the back of the existing parking lot area. He said that would eliminate any disturbance of the wetlands (to the North and West). During the construction period, he acknowledged that some temporary parking would need to be established until the existing building was vacated and could then be demolished.

Mr. Kasky explained the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) process could not be started until the general location had been decided upon. He noted that boring samples (and other construction tests) sometimes required quite a bit of time to complete. He clarified that CPA and the Core Team had identified Option D as their number one site location. He pointed out Option D had a desirable building location, access, security, parking, etc. and avoided the wetlands altogether.

Next, Mr. Kasky turned to the MC site plan which illustrated the original proposed location (at the front, center) and the current site (to the east of DMV). He said the

location was moved for a number of reasons, which included central entry and adjacencies to other Departments. In addition, he said, the construction costs to meet the building codes would be substantially less if the Addition were not immediately adjacent to the current building's walls.

Responding to questions from various Supervisors, Mr. Norris pointed out DMV, County Clerk and Real Property Tax Services would all stay in their current locations, although they would all be somewhat expanded.

Mr. Kasky explained the central entry point would be in the connecting hallway between the current DMV entrance and the new Addition. To the right of the existing service road, he noted, a new parking area would be built for employee use.

Mr. Norris further pointed out the new location allowed for the retention of windows in the existing offices as well as the new construction.

Mr. Kasky stated the next phase would be for the County to hire the Construction Manager (CM) for the project, and he said CPA was working with the County Attorney on the RFP (request for proposal). Once the CM was hired, he explained, the work schedules, building materials, and cost estimates could be narrowed down.

Mr. Haskell reported that only preliminary figures had been discussed, so far. Currently, he stated, the DSS reimbursed the County to maintain its present location. Mr. Morehouse reported the current reimbursement rate was \$16.88 per square foot, based on \$29,000 per year, depreciated over a 33.3 year period.

Mr. Haskell explained that Robert Phelps, Commissioner of Social Services, was currently researching whether or not the State DSS intended to cap the reimbursement amount. As for the preliminary figures, Mr. Haskell stated the new HSS Building, the Municipal Center Addition and Municipal Center Renovations, were estimated at \$44 Million (HSS Building at \$24 Million and the Municipal Center projects at \$20 Million).

Continuing, Mr. Haskell pointed out several alternative projects have been informally mentioned to different Committee members. He said he would like to bring those alternatives to the Committee for discussion at this point.

1. Purchase of the Ramada Inn in the Town of Lake George; and
2. The CNA building in the City of Glens Falls.

Mr. Haskell expressed his concerns with both options, as follows:

1. The Ramada was built as a motel, and not intended to be used as an office building; it lacks the square footage the County needed; the County already retrofitted an old Tuberculosis Clinic into office space, which had never been quite adequate. The Ramada Inn alternative would entail the purchase costs, plus renovations costs at approximately \$150 per square foot, resulting in a renovated motel and a vacant TB clinic. By comparison, he stated that new construction was approximately \$250 per square foot, resulting in efficient office space.

2. The CNA Building was an office building, although it was 20 years old; if the

County purchased it, the property would be removed from the City of Glens Falls' tax rolls; the communication system would need to be updated, and retrofitted for each department; parking space was also a problem.

Mr. Haskell acknowledged the representatives from CPA had been surprised this morning, when he sprung these alternate sites on them, just prior to today's meeting. He queried whether or not the CPA reps had any comments they would like to share at this point.

Privilege of the floor was extended to John Martin, of Clark Patterson Associates, who stated the Ramada Inn option immediately struck him that the original construction type was for a completely different use than what the County needed. He said he felt the necessary renovations would add significantly to the project costs. Specifically, he noted motels were designed for modular heating needs; most of the individual bathroom facilities would need to be removed; walls would need to either be removed for functional office space, or at least moved to create multiple offices. Without inspecting the current foundation, he said it was difficult to determine what walls would need to be retained for proper support.

Mr. Norris commented that he felt the Ramada Inn building would pose a number of security issues. He said the building would not allow proper separation of the public and staff areas.

Mr. Remington expressed his concerns with the energy costs associated with renovating a motel to serve as office space.

Mr. Kasky pointed out the co-generation facility, which was already in place, had been designed to serve the DSS building and the Westmount Health Facility. He said the co-gen facility would suddenly become very inefficient, if the County went with either of the alternate sites.

Mr. Morehouse commented the renovation costs for the Family Court Room area had run approximately \$250 a square foot, just two years ago.

In summary, Mr. Haskell said he would like to resolve the issue of alternate sites once and for all. He urged the Committee to set the direction and go forward.

Mr. Caimano referred to Mr. Haskell's comments regarding the CNA building coming off the City of Glens Falls tax rolls. He said he was conflicted with how the County could discuss ways to help boost the City, and then talk about taking money away.

Mr. Kenny, as a Supervisor for the City of Glens Falls, said he felt the City would have serious concerns with the building being removed from its tax rolls. He noted it ultimately would be a decision for the Mayor and Common Council. He further stated, it was not even known if the building was for sale.

Mr. O'Connor, as a Supervisor for the City of Glens Falls, echoed Mr. Kenny's concerns.

Motion was made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously that Warren County move forward with the construction of a new HHS building at its current location on Carol Thomas Lane, in the Town of Queensbury. The Committee further authorized a resolution be prepared for the August 18th Board meeting.

Responding to Mr. Girard's questions regarding the co-generation facility, Mr. Haskell clarified the project had been engineered to be budget neutral, only if it served both the DSS building and the Westmount Health Facility.

Mr. Haskell queried whether or not the Committee members were ready to discuss the dollar figures illustrated on the Concept Projects Costs included with the Agenda packet.

Mr. Kenny acknowledged that he was not a member of the Committee and had not been involved with a lot of the earlier discussions. He referred to the Department Square Footage Summary (included with the Agenda packet) and he observed that some departments had increased their space by more than 50%.

Mr. Haskell concurred that some departments space had increased substantially. He explained the Core Group had met with each department, at least twice (three times in some cases) to verify the square footage was appropriate.

Mr. Norris began a thorough review of the Department Square Footage Summary with the Municipal Center Addition. Regarding the Board of Elections, he stated, the Election Laws had recently been substantially changed, which required more retrieval, longevity and storage of the elections data. He noted the new regulations called for substantially more checking, verification, and documentation of work.

Mr. Haskell said he felt the new regulations would create a multi-billion dollar problem for the entire State of New York. In the past, he said, the County had not been required to provide even one square foot for storage of the voting machines. By comparison, he pointed out, the State now required the County to provide 7,000 square feet of storage, in a climate controlled environment.

Mr. Kenny, as a member of the Support Services Committee, stated the Board of Elections had reported on the new regulations in depth. He noted that some discussions had taken place with regards to each of the Towns providing the required storage space. Mr. Kenny expressed his concern with the County having to provide 7,000 square feet, at \$250 per square foot.

Mr. Geraghty left the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Mr. Morehouse pointed out that some of the proposed new machines could receive a maximum of 500 votes, which meant the County may need twice the number of machines. Further, he noted, the required storage space varied from 4 square feet to 8 square feet, depending on which machine was selected by the State of New York.

Following an extensive discussion, Mr. Haskell pointed out, that regardless of what machine was ultimately selected, the County intended to store them in the old jail cell area. He stated that if the chosen machine required less storage space than allotted, he indicated the space could be used for other types of storage. In addition, he noted, the renovation costs for the Old Jail were not yet known, which could come in too high to be cost effective.

Returning to the Board of Elections Office space, Mr. Norris stated, the 2,639 square feet included space for 2 future clerks, a public area and a conference room to be shared with other departments.

Discussion returned to the voting machine storage, as Mr. Kenny restated his feeling that the machines could be stored by the individual towns.

Mr. Haskell agreed that was an option. However, as the Supervisor for the Town of Thurman, he explained the Town of Thurman did NOT have a climate controlled area to store the machines. In addition, he also noted, Town storage would require the Board of Elections staff to travel to each location, monthly.

Mrs. Parsons said she understood another key factor behind the centralized storage, had to do with the electronic balloting and required a link to the IT (Information Technology) Department.

Mr. Kasky further stated the old jail cell area had a rather low ceiling height which did not lend itself to any other type of use, other than storage. Therefore, he said he felt the renovation costs would be limited to the removal of the bars and the installation of climate controls.

Mr. Haskell explained the engineers were currently researching exactly how many bars could be removed from the old jail cells, while maintaining structural integrity.

Mr. Norris continued to review the square footage summary for each of the departments. He mentioned that the gross square footage included the walls and restroom areas, while the new square footage represented the usable office space. He further noted that no conference room was dedicated to one particular department, and would be shared space.

As for the Supreme Court Law Library, Mr. Norris explained, the library was currently located in a secured area. Its relocation to the Addition, he noted, would make the library more accessible to the general public, as required by law. He pointed out the District Attorney's Office could have access to the library through the hallways in the basement level.

Mr. Norris reported, the study of the functions within the Tourism Department, revealed that the current set-up was extremely inefficient. He pointed out the Tourism Department had a lot of tourism products to be stored, shuffled around, and prepared for distribution. The new space, he said, placed the office on the first floor, the storage

on the basement level and the freight receiving area just across the hall.

Mr. Kenny returned the discussion to the Board of Elections proposed space. He pointed out the existing office was 980 sf and the proposed office space was close to 3 times as large, at 2,639 sf, with 7,000 sf of storage space. He queried if the proposed space for the Board of Elections was realistic.

Mr. Haskell agreed with Mr. Kenny and said he felt the storage space seemed unrealistic, at first glance. However, he said, once the Election Commissioners had made their presentation, with all of the facts in front of them, he said the 7,000 sf of storage had been adequately justified. (See the past 9 months of Support Services Committee Meeting minutes for more information.)

Messrs. Lemery and Wm. Thomas left the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

General discussion ensued.

Messrs. Remington and Mason left the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Mr. Kenny expressed his frustrations with the revised Election Law, the proposed storage space and the infrequent use of the voting machines. He pointed out only a portion of the voting population turns out for elections once every 4 years, and even fewer every two years.

Mrs. Sady left the meeting to contact the Election Commissioners and invite them to attend the meeting for further explanation.

Mr. O'Connor expressed his concerns over the State's new mandates, as well.

Mrs. Sady returned to the meeting and reported both Commissioners were attending a meeting, out of the building.

Mr. Kasky explained the 7,000 sf of storage space would not require extensive finishing (in the Old Jail) and he estimated the costs may be as low as \$100/sf rather than the average \$150.

Mr. Kenny declared the increased office space caused him more concern than the storage, at this point. Mr. Norris pointed out the 2,639 sf of office space included 400 sf of shared conference room, and the more realistic number was 2,200.

Next, Mr. Norris turned to the MC Renovations, and he explained the Courts still needed to make a few decisions before new locations could be pinpointed for the Planning and Community Development Dept., Print Shop, Stock Room and Mail Room.

Mr. Haskell reported he had personally toured the District Attorney Offices and said he felt the existing 3,522 sf was very confining.

Kate Hogan, the District Attorney, reminded the Committee the proposed space of 7,419 sf included anticipated growth over the next 20 years. Since the current space was too confining, the new space included future growth, she said she felt the 7,419 sf was extremely conservative.

Mr. Austin, Building Projects Coordinator, explained the DA's offices would expand into the existing Supreme Court Library. Ms. Hogan noted the library's relocation would mean the library visitors would no longer need to go through the magnetometers, and it would be much more inviting to the general public.

Continuing, Mr. Norris directed attention to the Human Services Building, on page 2 of the Square Footage Summary. He pointed out the public and staff areas would be clearly defined via the use of interview rooms in the public portion of the building. He further explained the Core Team had closely scrutinized the future projections regarding staff, work station size, etc. Just today, he stated, the Team had decided to further reduce the square footage allotted to the supervisory office spaces.

Mr. Norris mentioned the One Stop Center included two work cubicles, a reception area, a resource room, computer training area and central supply area. He stated the current space of 10,700 sf had been reduced to 6,207 net sf as the result of consolidating the spaces.

The Health Services projects, Mr. Norris said, had also been very closely reviewed regarding the future projections of staffing needs, as well as storage requirements for medical supplies, forms, files, clinical needs, dirty linen, etc.

Mr. Wm. Thomas and Mrs. Parsons left the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Next, Mr. Norris explained, the Point of Entry (POE) would require a 4 member staff, with one interview room, waiting room and file space. As for Office for the Aging (OFA), he said the staff area would continue to be separated from the public interview rooms. In view of the aging population, he said, the future staffing needs were estimated at five new staff members.

Responding to Mr. Kenny's questions, Messrs. Haskell and Norris acknowledged that OFA's current square footage amount was not readily available. As for the Veterans Office space, Mr. Haskell said he did not know the actual figure, but he pointed out the space was extremely small. Mr. Norris noted the new Veterans Office would have the Director's Office, 1 staff work station, waiting space for 6 chairs and space for 34 file cabinets, at a total of 887 sf. However, he reiterated, the supervisory space would be somewhat reduced.

Mrs. Sady left the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

Turning to the W.I.C. Offices, Mr. Norris explained the future projections called for NO change in the spacial or staffing needs, since the staff had been able to sort out and discard much of the items in storage. He pointed out their new space does include an

exam room, clinic prep area, and improved work station areas.

Ms. Hogan exited and Mrs. Parsons re-entered the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Turning to the Youth Bureau, Mr. Norris explained the new space allotted for a director, deputy director, a grant-writer position, and small public waiting space.

As for the Council for Prevention and Youth Advocacy Programs, Mr. Norris stated, the Agencies had simply indicated what space they would like to rent.

Discussion ensued with regards to the Youth Bureau's projection to add a new staff member.

Mr. Champagne entered and Mrs. Sady re-entered the meeting at 11:21 a.m.

Mr. Haskell reported the OFA currently leased 3,100 sf at the CNA building in downtown Glens Falls.

Mr. Girard said it was his understanding the One Stop Center was currently at the NYS DOL and E&T Offices (located in the Northway Plaza, in Queensbury) and a new lease had just been negotiated. He queried whether or not a cost comparison would be conducted that would demonstrate the financial impact to the County by leasing the offices at the new building.

Mr. Haskell confirmed that each of the department heads had been directed to prepare such cost comparisons. He said he anticipated the figures would be available for the next Board meeting.

Mr. Bentley, as chairman of the Federal Programs committee, reported the OFA staff had complied with the County Facilities directive to interview all of the Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers. He said the results showed everyone involved felt the new HHS building would be the best possible location for the meal site.

Mr. Haskell noted the Meal Site had been eliminated from the HHS building because the Supervisors from the Town of Queensbury had wanted the program to remain at The Cedars on Bay Road.

Mr. Champagne, as a Queensbury Supervisor, stated one of his concerns had been to obtain some sort of written survey results. Specifically, he said, he would like to know where the drivers were going, how many meals they delivered, and what type of impact the site location would have upon them. He commented that the Queensbury Supervisors had *only* said they wanted to study this further before making any decisions.

Mrs. Parsons acknowledged the Core Team felt the bottom line costs needed to be reduced. Once the Team had verified that the Department Heads had been very realistic in determining their specific needs, she noted, the Meal Site fell on the short

list.

Mr. Haskell concurred with Mrs. Parsons, and he said, the Queensbury Supervisors' sentiments had only been a factor in eliminating the Meal Site from the new building. He queried whether or not Committee members wanted the Meal Site included with the new HHS Building.

- ✓ Mr. Girard said if it was cheaper to locate it elsewhere, leave it out.
- ✓ Mr. Geraghty said he felt the Meal Site created other problems in the new building.
- ✓ Mr. F. Thomas expressed his concerns if the Meal Site would be serving other municipalities beyond Queensbury and Glens Falls.
- ✓ Mr. O'Connor pointed out that a number of drivers dropped out when the Meal Site moved from Maple Street in Glens Falls to The Cedars on Bay Road, in Queensbury. As for the costs for the commercial kitchen, he said he felt the costs alone were too high to warrant moving it from The Cedars.
- ✓ Mr. Champagne said he felt the commercial kitchen and Meal Site should remain at The Cedars.

Mr. Bentley pointed out that the OFA Director, Candace Kelly, should be notified of the County Facilities Committee's decision.

Discussion turned to the space allotted for the Council for Prevention and Youth Advocacy Program. Mrs. Parsons explained the Core Team had looked into what type of funds could be recouped through State Aid. She said she felt the County would need to be sure it's rental fee was in line with whatever the Agencies received from the State.

Mr. Haskell commented that the planned rental space would provide the County with future growth space, while serving as a revenue source for the immediate future.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Haskell pointed out that when he first became a Supervisor () he recalled the DSS building had just been evaluated to have a 15-year life expectancy. He stated the most recent tour of the building revealed the third floor was closed, due to a lack of structural integrity. Just today, he said, Mr. Morehouse had informed him that another portion of the cement floor had deteriorated, under the carpet. He noted the routine treatment for such problem areas, included removal of the crumbled cement and patching with duct tape. He expressed his concern with the current DSS building serving beyond another 5 years.

In addition, Mr. Haskell reminded the Committee the County was required by State Law to provide the State Court System with office space, for which the State pays rental fees back to the County. He declared it was more economical to renovate the Municipal Center offices to accommodate the Courts, since the County would be reimbursed for those costs. Such reimbursement, he said, will be used to help offset the costs of the new construction.

Mr. Haskell estimated the construction projects would bring the County's debt load to \$80 Million. Since the County's debt ceiling was allowed to go as high as \$440 Million, he said he felt it was time for this Board of Supervisors to take the step forward and build the offices to accommodate the current and future needs of the County. Otherwise, he pointed out, the County Departments will continue to be scattered throughout the County, wherever space could be leased, as the current DSS building disintegrated even further.

Mr. Haskell declared the Core Team had met continuously, and square footage had been cut and reduced at every step of the way.

Mr. O'Connor said he was pleased to see the various County Departments would once again be centralized with the new construction projects. He said he felt the County would reap a tremendous benefit through many different aspects of the project.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Haskell pointed out the one stumbling block the Committee members appeared to have today, was with regards to the Board of Elections projected space requirements. He stated the Core Team would meet with the Election Commissioners, one more time, and direct them to attend the August Board meeting, as well.

Discussion ensued with regards to the Board of Elections specific regulations for counting absentee ballots, voting records integrity, where and how the counting was conducted, etc.

Mr. Geraghty said he was concerned the new construction projects would provide sufficient space to allow for the next 30 years worth of growth. He encouraged the Committee to be realistic with the space allotments, so that 5 years from now the space was not discovered to be insufficient.

Mr. Haskell pointed out most work stations would be set up as cubicles and only the Department Heads would be given the formal office space. He said that should avoid the costly expense of moving walls for staff changes, etc.

Mr. Norris verified the Core Team probed the Department Heads with specific questions and based its decisions accordingly. He cautioned that the State and/or Federal regulations could change with very limited (if any) control at the County level. Should that occur, he noted, the County would just have to adjust accordingly. However, he declared, the decisions had all been made after careful review of the population, life expectancy, inter-department dependency, and smooth, efficient operations.

Mrs. Parsons echoed Mr. Norris' concerns with State mandates. As an example, she pointed out the new jail facility was mandated to provide an entire dormitory for the 6 female inmates. Unfortunately, she said, the male inmates had overflowed and the County had to pay to board them out.

Mr. Norris left the meeting at 11:28 a.m.

Mr. Champagne commended Mr. Haskell and Mr. Norris for their diligent efforts in keeping the building projects as trimmed down as possible.

Mr. Morehouse reported that Siemens Building Technologies had recently completed its study on the geo thermal application for the Municipal Center building, with favorable results. Consequently, he stated, it may be feasible for the County to avoid the costs for a new cooling tower. Just this past week, he reported the main heat pump for the Supreme Court Offices froze up at 10:00 p.m., which sent water running down the walls. He observed the renovations were badly needed.

Mr. Bentley encouraged the County Facilities Committee to move forward with the projects.

Mr. Haskell commended Jon Norris and his team from CPA for such a professional approach to working with the Department Heads and bringing about the best results possible.

Mr. Haskell observed the Agenda had one other item of business to discuss. He explained the Court System was in need of new chairs for the Court Rooms. He noted that Mr. Morehouse would be meeting with Judge Krogmann to recommend the chairs be purchased through the Court's budget.

Mrs. Parsons reminded the Committee of earlier discussions regarding possible renovations to the Board of Supervisors Board Room. She noted the audio/visual enhancements went out to bid with the lowest quote at \$18,000. In light of the pending construction projects, she queried how the Committee wanted to proceed.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to cancel the bid for Board Room renovations.

Mr. Haskell extended his appreciation to all who attended the meeting today. He said he valued everyone's input and verified the Board of Elections would be reviewed once again.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. O'Connor and seconded by Mr. Girard, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist